



THE ARP TOOLKIT SPENDING TRACKER BREAKOUT REPORT: MISSISSIPPI

February 2022 | As a part of its ARP Toolkit, the Southern Economic Advance Project publishes its initial report for the newly released ARP Local Funds Spending Tracker.



BACKGROUND

As part of the American Rescue Plan (ARP), the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) delivers \$130 billion in direct support to every community in the US. The scale of the SLFRF program is unprecedented, and local governments have broad discretion in how to use these funds, along with an extended timeline for spending (through 12/31/26).

Since mid-2021, the Southern Economic Advancement Project (SEAP) has encouraged local leaders to choose strategic recovery investments that address the highest priority needs and help residents and neighborhoods most affected by the pandemic. Our ARP Toolkit provides resources and information to local governments and advocates so they can make the most of their SLFRF funds. The goal is to help residents and local governments work together to build SLFRF spending plans that incorporate community input and achieve a more sustainable, equitable recovery.

NOTABLE TOOLS, DATA & RESOURCES

New SEAP Dashboard Shows Real-Time Info on Cities' SLFRF Spending

As of year-end 2021, local leaders setting priorities for local recovery funds is still heavily in progress. Many communities have not allocated most of their local recovery funds. In these places, local government leaders and residents are collecting input on needs and priorities and identifying investments that will have the most substantial impact. SEAP's new [SLFRF Spending Dashboard](#) offers a first look at the status of city-level SLFRF spending in more than 100 cities across several states.

The SLFRF Spending Dashboard also provides data on spending choices for cities where leaders have already made SLFRF decisions. The dashboard identifies and groups planned SLFRF spending into 12 categories (public health, affordable housing, business support, general government, etc.). Our interactive tool allows users to view this information at the city level and statewide.

Most communities (NEUs with a population of less than 250,000) are not required to report on their SLFRF spending until April 2022. Even then, their reports will only reflect actual expenses to date, not go-forward plans. Use this new Spending Dashboard to find real-time SLFRF plans, assess the status of local decision-making, and see trends in the type of recovery spending underway.



INITIAL RESULTS BY STATE

MISSISSIPPI

Our Phase 1 data covers 12 cities in Mississippi, which is roughly half of the approximately 20 cities in the state with a population greater than 20,000. These 12 communities are receiving \$100 million in total SLFRF allocations. Below are some key findings across the Mississippi dataset:

Results on Status of SLFRF Decision Making in MS Cities

- **Most spending decisions haven't happened yet.**
 - Half of the MS cities (50%) have made no spending decisions yet.
 - Across all MS cities, there are spending plans approved for 22% of funds.
 - These results indicate a significant opportunity for community engagement to help set local spending priorities and advocate for strategic and equitable SLFRF investments.
- **Spending decisions so far are not limited to the first half of funds.**
 - Four of the seven cities that have made SLFRF decisions have plans that only use the first half of the available funding.
 - Three cities have made plans for most or all of their total funding.
- **It's more difficult to draw direct comparisons between large and small cities.**
 - There are no Mississippi cities with a population greater than 250,000 and only one city (Jackson) with a population greater than 100,000.

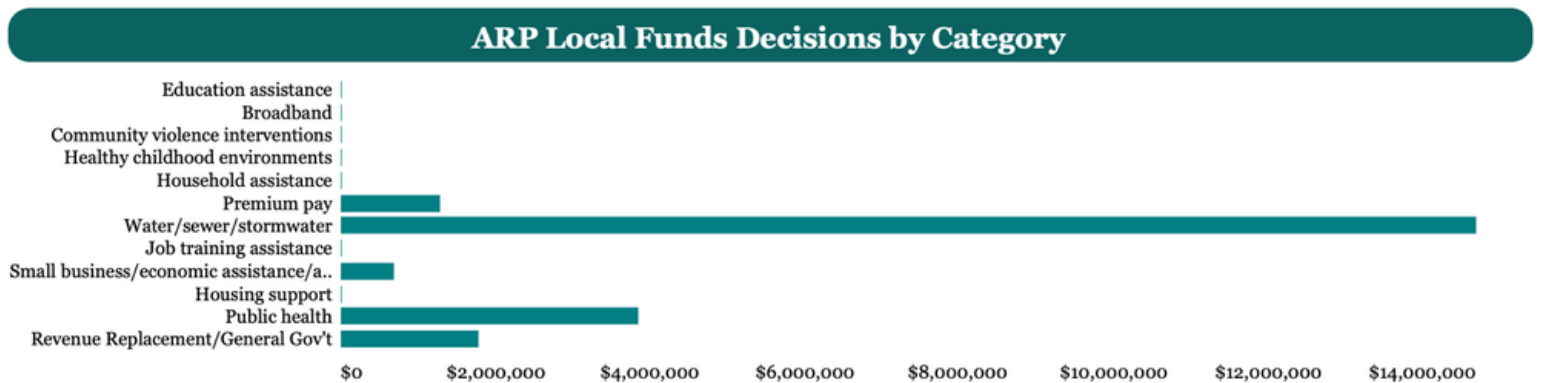
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Mississippi Results on Type of SLFRF Spending Planned To Date

Across the Mississippi dataset, spending plans to date emphasize Water/Sewer Infrastructure. This category accounts for roughly two-thirds of the total \$22 million in approved spending plans. Other early spending decisions include a smaller emphasis on Public Health and Revenue Replacement/General Government.

MS SLFRF Spending Decisions To Date By Category (n=12)



Other MS Findings:

- Within the Mississippi review so far, we have not identified clear examples of either equity strategies for SLFRF spending decisions or community engagement initiatives related to the decision-making process.

For more information or to include data from your community, contact Morgan Smith at SouthStrong@rooseveltinstitute.org.

